

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: San Francisco Family and Children's ServicesDate Completed: January 31, 2010

### Persons Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

Debby Jeter  
FCS Deputy Director  
415-558-2660  
[Debby.Jeter@sfgov.org](mailto:Debby.Jeter@sfgov.org)

William Siffermann  
Chief Probation Officer  
415-753-7556  
[William.Siffermann@sfgov.org](mailto:William.Siffermann@sfgov.org)

Adam Nguyen  
FCS Senior Analyst  
415-557-5403  
[Adam.Nguyen@sfgov.org](mailto:Adam.Nguyen@sfgov.org)

This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	During a major emergency, the Human Services Agency and Juvenile Probation Department will conduct safety and wellness checks and provide continuing services for their respective populations. Both agencies currently coordinate case planning for dual system youth as needed during a daily 2 o'clock meeting, and may continue to do so when possible during a disaster. Otherwise, the disaster

	<p>operation centers of each agency will communicate as necessary about placement and payment information. The Human Services Agency may also assist the Juvenile Probation Department with the mapping of their client data in order to facilitate wellness checks.</p> <p><i>GIS coordinated response.</i> The San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA) will use geographic information systems (GIS) to help manage its disaster response to foster children. Before and during disasters, the agency will map the residences of the agency's foster children throughout the nine Bay Area Counties and use the information in conjunction with in-coming assessments to deploy workers to the most adversely affected areas. HSA staff will use the maps and rosters<sup>1</sup> to locate and check on the agency's foster children. Upon contact, the HSA social worker will assess the safety and well-being of the child, and if necessary direct the family to disaster relief resources or place the child with a different substitute care provider if the current placement does not provide adequate care.</p> <p>Alternatively, if GIS is not available, the agency will first attempt to use the emergency management mapping function and reports within SafeMeasures to locate the agency's foster children. If SafeMeasures is not available, then social workers will be assigned children from printed rosters sorted by zipcode.</p> <p><i>Prioritized response.</i> Twenty-four hour response will be prioritized to pre-identified medically fragile children. Children in county licensed foster homes will have the next highest priority. HSA will contact all other foster children as quickly as possible.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	<p>Following a disaster, HSA social workers will first attempt to call and/or text substitute care providers to inquire about the health and safety of their families. If telecommunications are not available, workers will conduct home visits in order of response prioritization.</p> <p>Families relocating to other areas are required to send an email to the Agency's designated address or call the Hotline as soon as possible to update their contact information including address and phone numbers. If Hotline workers are unavailable, a voicemail system will provide instructions and allow the family to leave messages about how to contact them in the future.</p>

<sup>1</sup> The rosters will be in spreadsheet format and contain essential information about foster children including children's names, addresses, phone numbers, caretaker names, and medically fragility.

Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<p>HSA will coordinate response for evacuations as per instructions from the SF Department of Emergency Management and the county Emergency Operations Center.</p> <p>HSA recommends its foster families residing in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo Counties subscribe to AlertSF. AlertSF is a text-based notification system for San Francisco’s residents and visitors. AlertSF sends watches and warnings for tsunamis, flooding and tornados and citywide post-disaster information to registered wireless devices and email accounts. Registrants can also sign up to receive English-language automated information feeds and/or alerts targeted to specific areas of the City.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	See above.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p>HSA is responsible for the citywide mass care and shelter function. As such, the Agency has worked with the local Red Cross office to identify over 80 potential shelter sites within the city. This is in addition to a shelter system developed by local faith based networks.</p> <p>Unlike other counties, San Francisco does not normally operate a child welfare shelter. Instead, HSA has a Child Protection Center (CPC) for children entering the Child Welfare System due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Under normal circumstances, the center provides safety and health assessments and temporary care for children (for a maximum of 23 hours) while an appropriate placement is found.</p> <p>During a major emergency, the CPC will process the intake of unaccompanied minors and provide emotional support, nourishment, medical assessment, and crisis intervention/mental health assessment as needed until the children are reunified or other placements are secured. If the influx of unaccompanied minors exceeds the capacity of the CPC’s facilities, the children may be temporarily sheltered at a nearby facility.</p> <p>For disasters occurring during school hours, children at school will be sheltered in place until their parents are able to pick them up. Otherwise, first responders – including police, fire, and medical workers – are currently instructed to take unaccompanied minors to HSA’s Child Protection Center</p>

	<p>(CPC), which is co-located with the County General Hospital. HSA's Disaster Operation Center will be in regular communication with the CPC following an event.</p> <p>HSA workers may be deployed to shelters for 12 hour shifts to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, including follow-up action to reunite unaccompanied minors with their parents/guardians or to provide appropriate temporary placement.</p> <p>HSA and the Bay Area Chapter of the American Red Cross have a memorandum of understanding and court order to share data in order to identify foster children entering Red Cross disaster shelters. HSA will provide the Red Cross a list of our client names and their birthdates. Red Cross will then search their Disaster Victim Inquiry System and notify HSA about client matches. Once HSA identifies foster children staying at shelters, the Agency will contact them to verify their status and connect the family to available resources as necessary.</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	Following a disaster, HSA will make reasonable efforts to contact the biological parents of the Agency's foster children and provide information about the status of their children as it becomes available. However, the immediate priority will be to secure the location and safety of children in care.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	<p>During or after a disaster, HSA is not absolved from any of its State mandated child abuse referral responsibilities; however, Government Code 8567 does allow the Governor to make, amend, and rescind State regulations. If necessary, HSA may submit a request to the Governor through the county's Emergency Operations Center to suspend appropriate State mandated child abuse referral responsibilities.</p> <p>Immediately after a disaster, HSA will dedicate available resources as needed to continue all State and Federal mandated services. To help ensure continued delivery of benefits following a disaster, HSA plans to encourage foster families to receive payments by direct deposit. This will help prevent delays in check processing due to interrupted mail service, families evacuating their homes, or destruction of HSA infrastructure. After a disaster event, scheduled benefit payments will automatically continue for two months. To provide incentive for families to contact HSA and provide an update on the status of the foster child(ren) in their care, foster families are expected to contact the Agency within the two-month post-disaster period. If the foster family fails to do so, benefit payments will discontinue.</p>

	HSA will shift staff responsibilities as necessary to help maintain continuity of core services for the Agency's existing foster children and new referrals. Non-essential functions such as adoption services may be temporarily suspended as necessary.
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	<p>All City and County employees are designated by both State and City law as "Disaster Service Workers." When the Mayor or the designated next in command declares an emergency, all public employees are obligated to serve as Disaster Service Workers and may be assigned to perform activities outside of their normal duties that promote the protection of public health and safety or the preservation of lives and property. HSA staff responsibilities may change as reasonable and necessary to help fulfill the Agency's City, State, and Federally mandated response roles. As per City policy, HSA staff will not be expected to perform disaster response duties that are unsafe or that they do not know how to perform.</p> <p>As previously noted, some HSA staff will have pre-designated immediate disaster response duties, such as staffing a shelter or conducting health and wellness checks on medically fragile foster children. These special assignments will supersede assignment to general Disaster Worker assignments.</p> <p>The nature of HSA's response will depend on the location and scale of the disaster, time of day, and availability of staff. The agency will dedicate available staff and resources to disaster response as appropriate given the scale and type of event.</p> <p>For a disaster that occurs during business hours, all staff are expected to immediately report to their supervisor or the available next higher ranking manager. Some HSA staff members may be released from duty to check on their families. Before dismissal, however, these workers will be given maps, client rosters, and an assignment to check on foster families that live close to them to ensure the safety and well-being of the foster children. Workers will be expected to report back to duty as instructed prior to dismissal. Given that the local bridges and mass transit systems may be inoperative, workers that reside outside the disaster area may be requested to remain on duty and help the Agency to implement its immediate disaster response.</p> <p>For a disaster that occurs during non-business hours, HSA managers and supervisors will activate the phone trees as discussed in Section 12 of this document. HSA workers with pre-determined immediate response roles will be expected to automatically check on their assigned foster children</p>

	within a specified time frame and report back to their supervisors by phone or through the Agency's emergency website ( <a href="http://www.sfhsaemergency.org/">http://www.sfhsaemergency.org/</a> ). Unless otherwise instructed, HSA workers without pre-assigned response roles will be expected to report to work at their regularly scheduled work time or as instructed according to the countywide disaster response plan.
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	Immediately following a disaster, ensuring the safety and well-being of the Agency's current foster children – especially the medically at-risk – and unaccompanied minors will be the highest priority. Otherwise, HSA will assign available staff as necessary to fulfill the agency's disaster response functions and maintain continuity of services to existing and new clients. HSA's Family and Children's Services division has a completed pandemic plan that identifies which core functions must be maintained at depleted staffing levels during an emergency and which functions can be temporarily suspended.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	<p>HSA Family and Children's operations are conducted at multiple sites. In addition to the Agency's administrative headquarters at 170 Otis, these include 1650 Mission, 3801 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3120 Mission, and 225 Valencia. 1650 Mission and 1235 Mission are the designated backup headquarter sites. Following a disaster, HSA employees will be expected to report to their normal worksite or designated staging area unless instructed otherwise. If a facility is inaccessible, the Agency's Disaster Operations Center will instruct those workers about an alternative location to report to, dismiss them, or direct those with the ability to do so to telecommute.</p> <p>Some workers may be assigned to a temporary East Bay office in order to 1) assist with disaster response for foster children placed out-of-county, or 2) perform regular work or other disaster response duties if the City is inaccessible.</p>
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	<p>A disaster training module has been incorporated into the training provided to all new HSA employees. Additional disaster worker training and response protocols (including protocols specific to child welfare workers) are currently under development and will be rolled out to staff upon completion. HSA staff also participate in periodic citywide disaster response exercises.</p> <p>As citywide Disaster Service Workers, all HSA employees are expected to:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the <a href="#">Disaster Service Worker Training</a> curriculum;</li> <li>2. Complete FEMA independent study courses including IS-700 Introduction to National Incident Management System (<a href="#">NIMS</a>) and IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System (<a href="#">ICS</a>);</li> <li>3. Select staff are required to complete ICS-200, ICS-300, ICS 400, IS-700, and IS-800.</li> <li>4. Disaster Service Workers may also attend <b>optional</b> Functional Response Training, with courses in neighborhood emergency response teams (<a href="#">NERT</a>), basic first aid, stress management, CPR, and shelter management.</li> </ol>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:</b>	<b>Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:</b>
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	New child welfare investigations will be conducted in accordance with State and Federal law. However, under extreme circumstances HSA may seek permission from the court to extend some State and Federal mandated deadlines.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	HSA disaster planning efforts are focused on maintaining continuity of existing services in the aftermath of a disaster. HSA is currently planning implementation protocols for the following new services to be offered in the aftermath of a disaster: health and safety checks on pre-designated vulnerable clients, inspections of Agency facilities, and provision of mass care and shelter for San Francisco residents impacted by a disaster.
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:</b>	<b>Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	<p>If a disaster occurs during business hours, workers should report to their supervisor or senior manager for instructions.</p> <p>For disasters occurring during non-business hours, HSA managers and supervisors will activate the phone tree and contact staff to check on their status and provide work instructions. HSA staff will</p>

	also make reasonable efforts to contact their supervisor or other appropriate managers.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	See above.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	Protocols for communicating with specific types of contractors (e.g., meal programs, shelters, foster family agencies) are under development.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	<p>An agency website is available in the event of disaster: <a href="http://www.sfhsaemergency.org/">http://www.sfhsaemergency.org/</a>. The site will provide key information for staff, contractors, and clients, and enable each party to send messages to agency staff by program and function.</p> <p>If normal communications are down or attempts are unsuccessful, workers should listen to the designated radio stations (KNBR 680AM, KCBS 740AM, KGO 810AM, KQED 88.5FM, or KALW 91.7FM) for instructions.</p>
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	HSA will communicate with staff, clients, and partnering agencies as necessary.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	<p>Inquiries from the media about HSA related activities should be directed to the agency's Public Information Officer (PIO). Otherwise, the media should be directed to call the citywide Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for information.</p> <p>HSA staff assigned to shelters may be approached by the media. If answering questions from the media, staff should follow Red Cross media guidelines which are: only give answers concerning the shelter that you are working in; only give answers related to the job you are doing; do not guess, only provide facts; disaster victims cannot be shown on television or interviewed without their consent.</p>



Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	HSA will not directly manage volunteers.
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	<p>HSA's telephone numbers are listed below:</p> <p>General (415) 557-5000  Child Abuse Hotline (800) 856-5553.  Teletypewriter(TTY) (415) 355-6756.</p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:</b>	<b>Preserve essential program records:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	<p>HSA's essential program records are primarily stored in the statewide database Child Welfare System Case Management System, otherwise known as CMS. The CMS server maintenance is managed by the State's vendor, IBM Global Services. IBM is contractually bound to the State to provide extensive Disaster Recovery services in the event of emergencies. The services include, but are not limited to, providing access to San Francisco County data from Sacramento or, if necessary, another County welfare office.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	<p>As an extra layer of data protection, HSA also backs up San Francisco County caseload extracts from CMS data on Agency servers and portable hard drives of key executive staff, including the Agency's Executive Director, Deputy Director for Family and Children's Services, and designated FCS Program Directors. The data extracts for current foster care cases are updated quarterly. The data extracts from the Child Welfare System Case Management System (CMS) contain essential contact information stored in Excel format.</p> <p>Alternatively, if CMS is not available, SafeMeasures may be used to view client records.</p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response</b>	<b>Coordinate services and share information with other states:</b>

<b>Criteria E:</b>	
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	HSA will manage ICPC cases under existing protocols.
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	The county Emergency Operations Center will coordinate services with mental health providers.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The county Emergency Operations Center will coordinate services with the courts.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	The California Department of Social Services will be responsible for coordinating services and sharing information with federal partners.
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	The county Emergency Operations Center will coordinate services with the CDSS.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	San Francisco County does not have any federally registered tribes.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	The San Francisco Human Resources Department will manage volunteers.